

Dance Traditions - DANC 211/4 - Winter 2007

Philip Szporer

Monday 3-6 P.M. - TJ-303

Office Hours: by appointment

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Course text: There is one text for this course, *Moving History/Dancing Cultures (A Dance History Reader)*, edited by Ann Dills & Ann Cooper Albright (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001) - available in the university bookstore. Periodically, a short article may supplement the course text, if relevant.

Please feel free to bring in exceptionally-good articles, books, video clips, sound bytes that you have found so that we can share your intellectual discoveries.

The course will attempt to train students in basic research skills, the importance of historical context, the use and documentation of primary and secondary sources, the critical interpretation of texts, and the implications of methodological approaches.

Modernism, Post-Modernism and Beyond

Lecture 1 (Jan 8)

Birth of Modern Dance: Duncan, Delsarte, Fuller, Allen, St. Denis, Shawn, Laban, Wigman, Jooss

Lecture 2 (Jan 15)

Library Tour -3:00 P.M. Orientation Room, Vanier Library, w/ librarian Vince Graziano. Room VL-127 (compulsory)

Screening of videos: 'Denishawn', 'Shawn and The Men Dancers', and other material, after the orientation, in the library.

>>Assignment #1: (4 points)

Compulsory reading:

- Marcia Siegel. "The Harsh and Splendid Heroines of Martha Graham", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001; pp. 307-314.

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Jan 22).

Lecture 3 (Jan 22)

Graham, Horst, Humphrey, Hawkins, Limon, Holm

Guest: Mariko Tanabe, noted dancer/choreographer and former member of the Erick Hawkins troupe, to speak to the class (one hour).

>>Assignment #2: (4 points)

Compulsory Reading:

- Brenda Dixon Gottschild. "Stripping the Emperor: The Africanist Presence in American Concert Dance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 332-341.

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Jan 29).

Recommended Reading:

- Thomas DeFrantz, "Simmering Passivity: The Black Male Body in Concert Dance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 342-349. (for Jan 29)

Lecture 4 (Jan 29)

Dunham, Primus, Ailey, Mitchell, Fagan

Recommended reading:

- Deborah Jowitt, "Chance Heroes", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 362-364. (for Feb. 5)

Lecture 5 (Feb 5)

Cunningham, Taylor, Nikolais, Robbins

>>Assignment #3: (4 points)

Compulsory reading:

- Peter Ryan, "10000 Jams Later: Contact Improvisation in Canada, 1974-95", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 414-420.

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Feb 12).

Recommended Reading:

- Sally Banes, "Choreographic Methods of the Judson Dance Theater", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 350-361. (for Feb 12)

Lecture 6 (Feb 12)**Post-Modernism in the US**

Perspectives and concerns of the Judson Church to Contact Improvisation (Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Laura Dean, Twyla Tharp, Steve Paxton, Nancy Stark Smith, Simone Forti, Elizabeth Streb, Meredith Monk, etc...), and the emergence of forms and connections in Canada (Toronto Dance Theatre, EDAM, Catpoto).

STUDY WEEK: Feb. 19 – no lecture**Suggested Reading:**

Iro Tembeck, "The Flowering of the Independents", in *Dancing in Montreal*. Madison, WI.: Studies in Dance History, The Journal of the Society of Dance History Scholars, pg 79-98. (For Feb 26)

Lecture 7 (Feb 26)**Parallel Universe: Quebec Dancing into the 21st Century**

Consideration of the social, political and cultural shifts in Quebec, with emphasis on Groupe de la Place Royale to Nouvelle Aire, the major figures (Édouard Lock, Ginette Laurin, Paul-André Fortier, Marie Chouinard, Jean-Pierre-Perreault), the rise of the independents, and how certain kinds of dance move from the margins to the mainstream.

Suggested Reading:

- Ananya Chatterjea, "Chandralekha: Negotiating the Female Body and Movement in Cultural/Political Significance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 389-397. (For Mar 5)

Lecture 8 (Mar 5)**I. Post-Modern Strategies Beyond North America**

The emergence of Tanztheatre in Germany (Susanne Linke, Reinhild Hoffman, Pina Bausch), William Forsythe, African contemporary dance forms, the traditional vs. contemporary dialectic in Asian dance.

>>Assignment #4: (4 points)

Compulsory Reading:

- Bonnie Sue Stein, "Butoh: "Twenty Years Ago We Were Crazy, Dirty and Mad", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 376-383.

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (**due Mar 12**).

Lecture 9 (Mar 12)

II. Post-Modern Strategies Beyond North America

Butoh (Japan)

Recommended reading:

- Ann Cooper Albright, "Embodying History: Epic Narrative and Cultural Identity in African American Dance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 439-454. (**For Mar 19**)

Lecture 10 (Mar 19)

The Africanist presence in Contemporary American Performance:

Willa Jo Zollar, Bill T. Jones, Ralph Lemon, Rennie Harris, Ron Brown, Bebe Miller, Savion Glover._

>>Assignment #5: (4 points)

Compulsory Reading:

- "Discussing the Undiscussible", Arlene Croce, *The New Yorker*, 1995 (handout to students)

Write 2 questions addressing issues brought out in the article that could be used for an in-class debate (**due Mar 26**).

Lecture 11 (Mar 26)

Critical Perspectives

Dance writing and ethics, incorporating a debate of the required reading.

Lecture 12 (Apr 2)

Dance on Film and Video

Dance technologies and experimentation, from Norman McLaren, Maya Deren, Merce Cunningham/Charles Atlas, William Forsythe, Lloyd Newson, to

the Hollywood musical, and dance for television - Dance in America (PBS), Rhombus Media, the BBC, MTV and Bravo!FACT.

Final essay due – first date to submit (encouraged for those who have a busy final week at the university)

April 9 – Easter Break - NO CLASS

April 10 - Final essay due – absolute deadline, 12 noon. Late submissions after this date will be penalized a grade per day.

GRADING:

Assignments & Exams:

1 - quiz (2) – 40%

Two short answer in-class exams based on class lectures, discussion, readings, media examples, and discussions.

2 - précis of required reading or writing of relevant questions (5 in total – each assignment 4 points) - 20%

Grading of the précis is based on clarity of expression, understanding of material, and to elucidate the relevance, significance, and essential meaning of the articles/chapters. Typed, doubled-spaced (reasonable font size).

3- final essay - 30% Due: Apr 2 or absolute final date April 10

“Dancing out the Difference” is the focus for the essay. Choose an individual or a group of individuals and put into context the impact of their work. Consider the social, cultural and the aesthetic shift realized through their efforts.

The essay may be written in French or English. All papers (length: 5 pages) must be typed, double-spaced, (with a reasonable font size), paginated, and include your name, a title, as well as proper citations/references, bibliography, filmography, videography, etc. . . .

No papers accepted after this date.

Grades are based on clarity of expression, observational, descriptive, and analytic skills, research methods, references, footnotes and bibliography.

4- attendance and participation - 10%

Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of every class. Students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. If you miss one class, your attendance/participation mark will automatically decrease 5%, two absences 10%. Exception: if you have a justified absence (please see the Teacher and Student Handbook for department rules and a definition of what is justified).

Summary of Criteria of Evaluation:

1. Pop Quiz (2): 40% (first quiz is worth 20%, the second is worth 20%)
2. Precis and Questions related to Compulsory Readings: 20%.
3. Final Essay (due Apr 2 or absolute final date Apr 11, 2007): 30%
4. Attendance: 10%

To receive the best grade, your writing must be error-free and well structured.
Plagiarized work will result in a failed grade.

LATE WORK IS NOT ENCOURAGED. If you have a valid reason for postponing assignment submissions, such as a death in the family or a serious illness, please contact me (or Hilary, the Department Assistant), and we'll arrange a reasonable alternative. Otherwise, a grade will be deducted for each day the paper is late (i.e, 'B' to 'B-').